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MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI.

MASTER OF KUNG FU

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TM



GENE DAY



A FANTASY OF THE AUTUMN MOON!

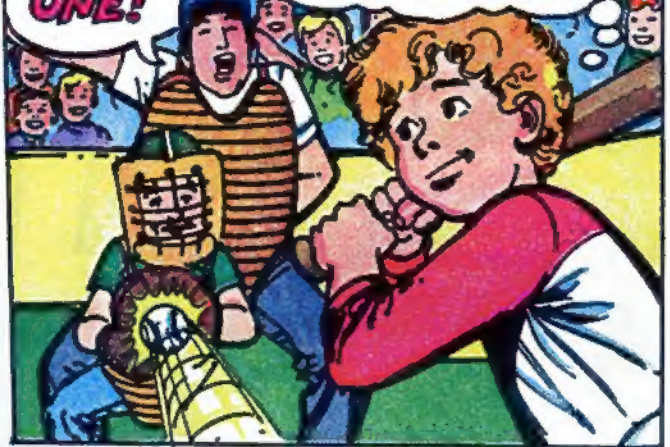
SCOTTIE in *A Cracker Jack story*

OKAY, SCOTTIE! THE SCORE IS TIED, BASES LOADED, AND TWO OUTS! GET IN THERE AND SHOW 'EM WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF.



STRIKE ONE!

GULP! WHAT IF I STRIKE OUT???



STRIKE TWO!

YOU CAN DO IT, SCOTTIE!

YOU'RE A CRACKER JACK.



WHEN YOU'RE REALLY GOOD- THEY CALL YOU CRACKER JACK

YOU DID IT, SCOTTIE.

WE WON THE PLAYOFFS!

WHAT A CRACKER JACK!



Crunchy caramel-coated popcorn and peanuts and a secret toy surprise!

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my father did, when he raised me in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father: that my name means 'The Rising and Advancing of a Spirit,' and that my body could be forged into a living weapon through the discipline of kung fu. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on Earth... and that to honor him would bring nothing but **dishonor** to the spirit of my name."

Stan Lee PRESENTS: MASTER OF KUNG FU!

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

"FANTASY... AN ETHEREAL MAGIC SOFT AND DELICATE AND SILENT AS A LEAF UPON THE AIR. AND YET THE LEAF ITSELF, FLOATING AS IT DOES IN THE SWAY OF INVISIBLE GUIDANCE IS **NOT** A FANTASY. IT IS REAL, AND EVERYONE HAS SEEN THE FALL OF SUCH LEAVES... EVEN IF ONLY IN DARKNESS, UNDER A HARVEST OF MOONLIGHT."



DOUG MOENCH
SCRIPTER

GENE DAY
PENCILER
& INKER

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COLORIST

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LETTERER

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"STORMHAVEN CASTLE STANDS PROUDLY ON THE LONELY MOORS OF SCOTLAND. OWNED BY SIR DENIS NAYLAND SMITH, IT IS FROM HERE THAT FREELANCE RESTORATIONS BASES ITS OPERATIONS.

"THE MUSIC OF THE WIND BEYOND LEADED PANES OF ANCIENT GLASS GIVES WAY TO LEIKO'S NEW SPEAKERS.

"I LISTEN..."

"EVERYBODY WANTS SOMEBODY'S FANTASY; EVERYBODY WANTS SOMEBODY'S CRAZY DREAM..."

STILL ON YOUR STONES KICK, EH?

WELL, IF YOU CAN DRAG YOURSELF AWAY FROM MICK AND THE BOYS, SIR DENIS WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU...

GET UP...?

...GET OUT...?

...GET INTO SOMETHIN' NEW...

EVENING, LAD... SHARE THE FIRE WHILE I CUT STRAIGHT TO THE HEART OF IT.

A WOMAN NAMED MARA LING HAS CONTACTED MI-6'S HONG KONG BRANCH, REQUESTING AID. SHE CLAIMED FEAR FOR HER OWN AND HER HUSBAND'S LIVES...

A FARFETCHED STORY, ACCORDING TO MI-6. ABOUT SOME ALMOST SUPERNATURAL ASSASSIN WHO'S BEEN CHASING THEM FOR FORTY-ODD YEARS... AND WHO IS NOW DEAD ON THEIR TAILS.

PRRRR

"THE FIRE CRACKS; LEIKO HUMS; THE WOOD OF THE BANISTER CREAKS... BUT THE FINEST SOUND OF ALL IS MADE BY THE CAT.

BUT EVEN WERE THE STORY NOT LACKING CREDIBILITY, IT IS OUT OF MI-6'S OFFICIAL JURISDICTION-- SO FOR AN OBVIOUS REASON, THEY'VE PASSED IT ON TO ME, THINKING OUR FREELANCE RESTORATIONS OUT-FIT MIGHT BE INTERESTED.

FOR THAT SAME REASON, LAD, I'M PRESENTING IT TO YOU.

AND THE REASON, SMITH?

ACCORDING TO THE WOMAN MARA LING, THE "ALMOST SUPERNATURAL ASSASSIN"... IS SI-FAN.

"A SI-FAN-- THE ELITE CORPS OF SUICIDAL BLOOD-TAKERS ORGANIZED BY MY FATHER FU MANCHU, AND EMPLOYED THROUGHOUT HIS MANY LONG CAMPAIGNS OF DARKNESS AND EVIL.

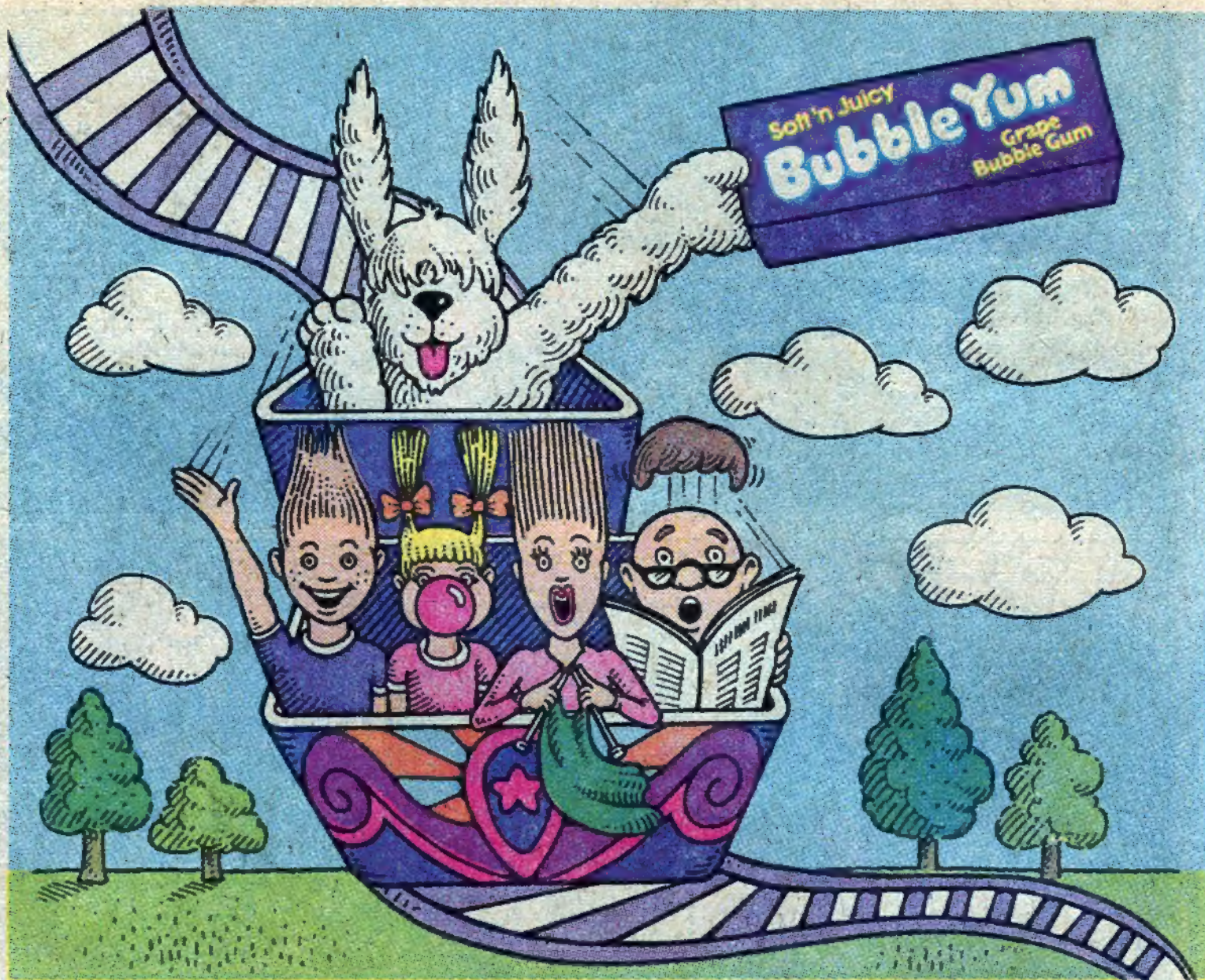
"SO FANATICAL IS THEIR DEVOTION TO FU MANCHU THAT IT HAS EXTENDED EVEN BEYOND HIS SUPPOSED DEATH.

"SO EXTREME IS THEIR PRACTICE OF UNNATURAL KILLING ARTS THAT THEY HAVE OFTEN TAKEN ON THE CAST OF DEVILS POURING FROM HELL.

"AND MORE THAN ONCE, MEMBERS OF THE SI-FAN HAVE NEARLY TAKEN MY LIFE IN CRUELTY, AND WITH GREAT RELISH.

WELL, LAD... ?

"THE FIRE HAS GONE COLD; LEIKO NO LONGER HUMS... AND THE CAT HAS STOPPED PURRING.

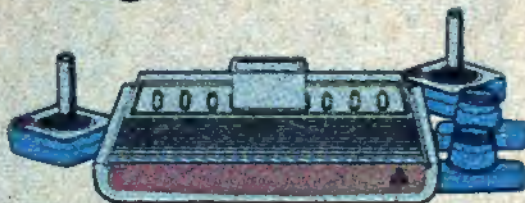


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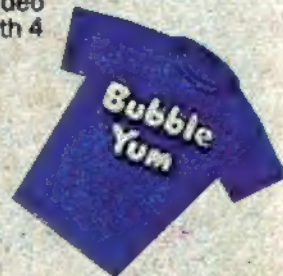
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(2,000) 4th Prizes: Box of delicious Grape Bubble Yum.

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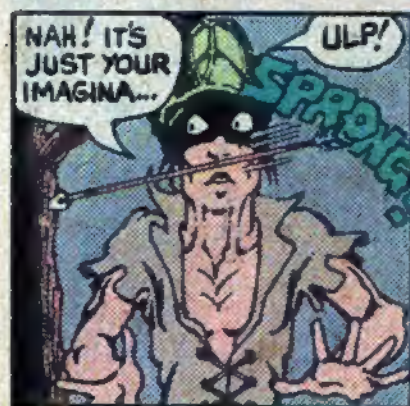
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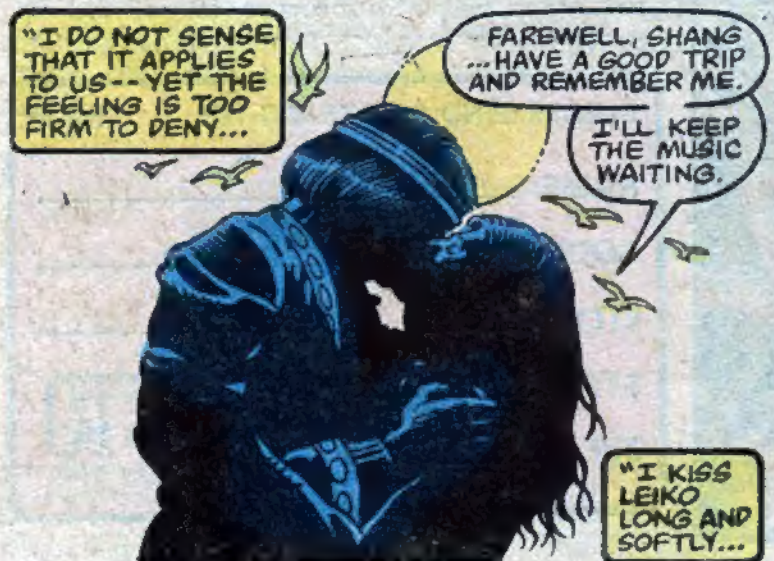
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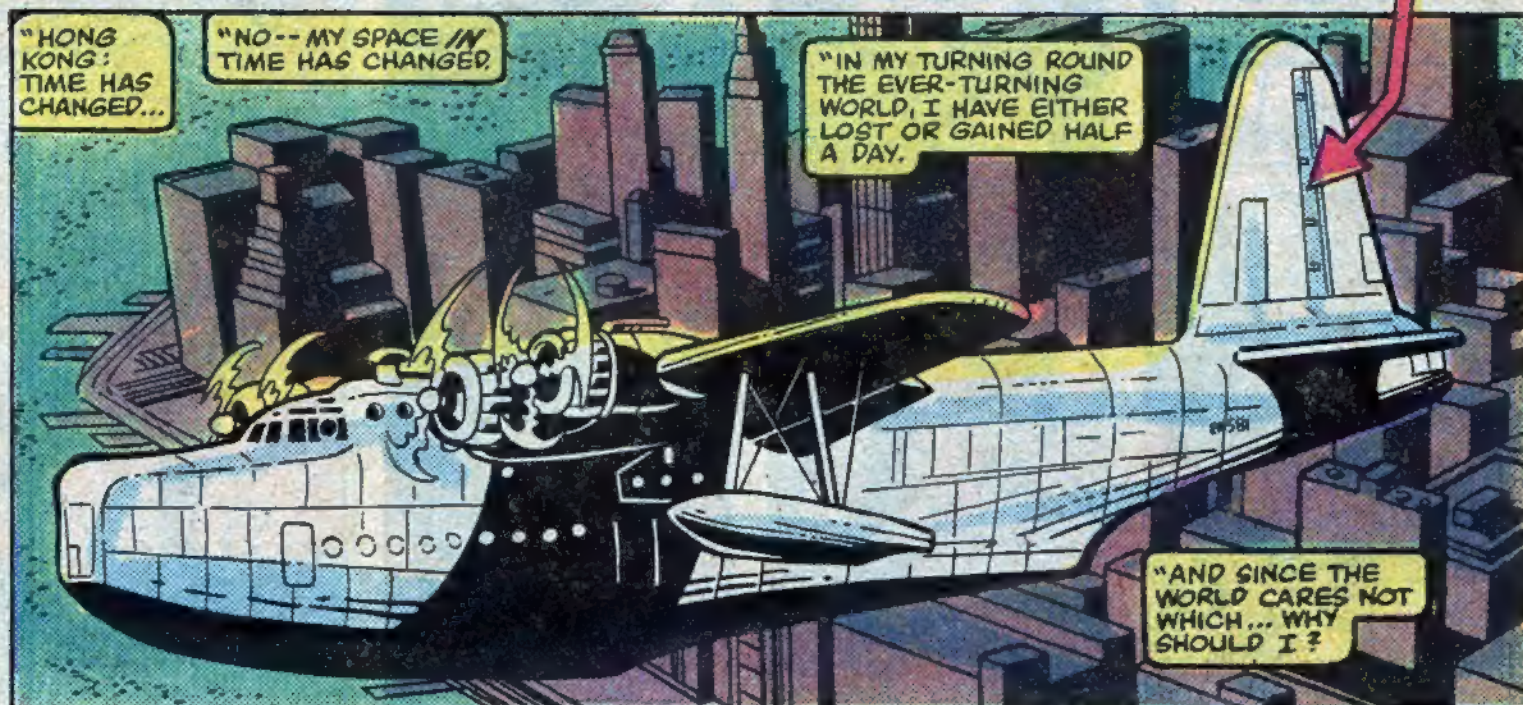
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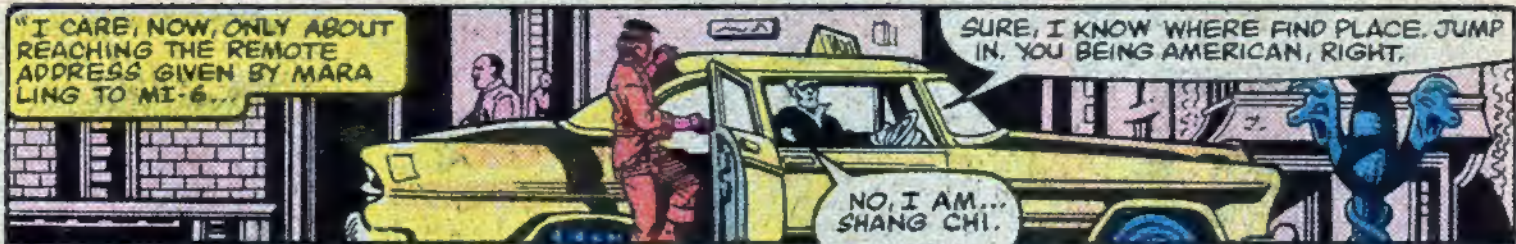


The Game Wizards





"I CARE, NOW, ONLY ABOUT REACHING THE REMOTE ADDRESS GIVEN BY MARA LING TO MI-6..."



SURE, I KNOW WHERE FIND PLACE. JUMP IN. YOU BEING AMERICAN, RIGHT.

NO, I AM... SHANG CHI.

"WE CROSS BUT SEVERAL STREETS BEFORE BEING HALTED BY A MARCHING FANTASY."



WHAT IS THIS, DRIVER?

VERY BIG CELEBRATION-- FESTIVAL OF THE AUTUMN MOON--

--OBSERVED FOR 5000 YEARS, MAYBE MORE. BIGGEST CELEBRATION OF ALL TONIGHT WHEN FULL MOON SHOWS BRIGHT FACE, FIRE-CRACKERS, LIGHTS, DANCING. BIG FUN!



"AH, YES... MY FATHER NEVER CELEBRATED SUCH FESTIVALS, FINDING GLORY ONLY IN HIMSELF..."

"... BUT I REMEMBER HEARING OF IT DURING MY TEACHINGS AS A YOUTH IN THE HONAN FORTRESS-RETREAT."



"THE PARADE PASSES; SO DO WE."

NHH--?



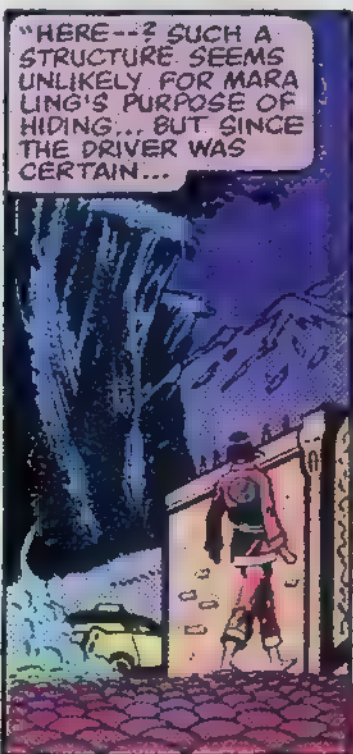
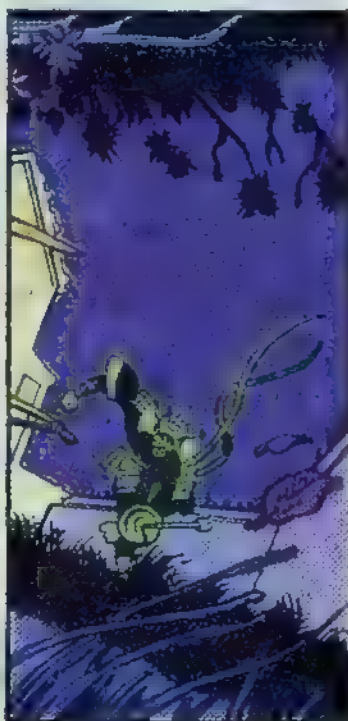
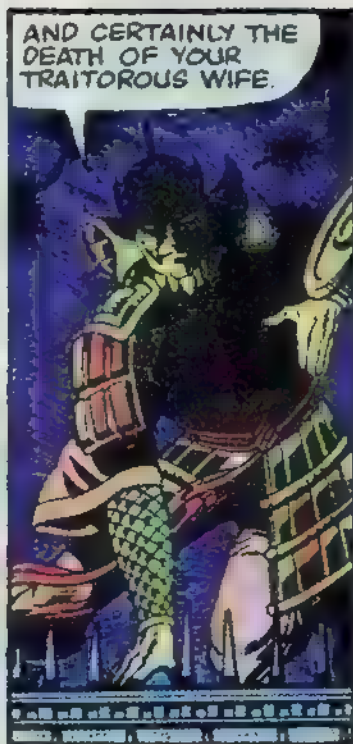
NOT A LEAF THIS TIME...

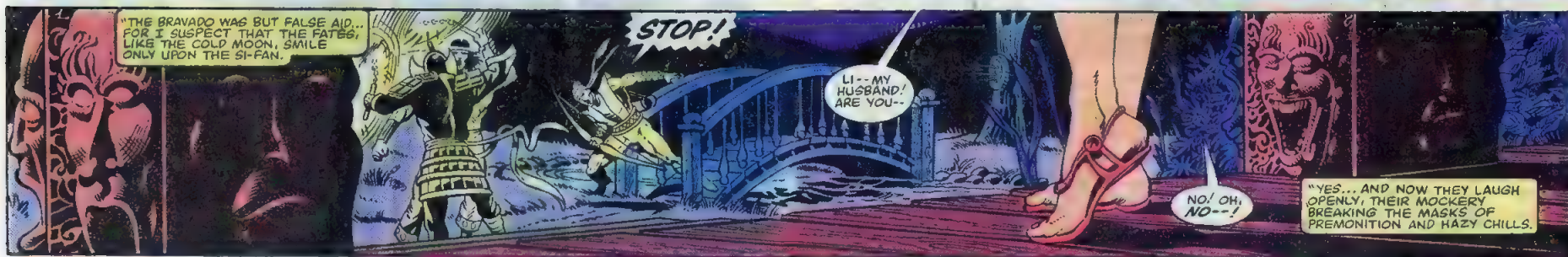
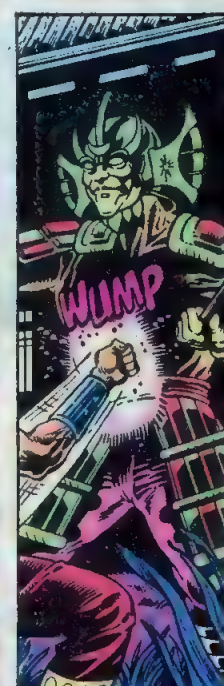
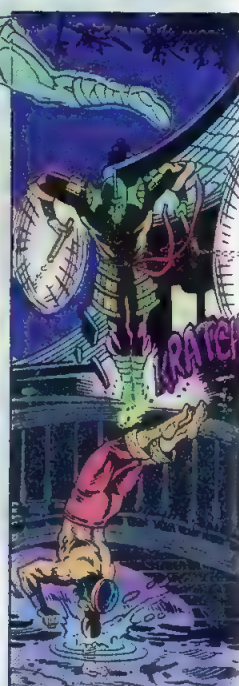
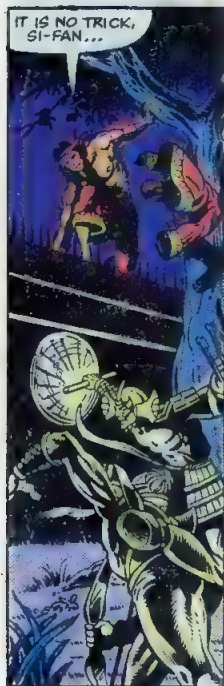


... BUT WHAT...

... IS IT?







HE STRIKES FROM
OUTER SPACE--

--AND NOTHING
CAN STOP HIM!

ROM

SPACEKNIGHT



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NEW STAR
IN THE
MARVEL
ARMAMENT!

ON
SALE
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GET THIS! WILLY WONKA'S MAGIC JUMPING DISC OFFER.

They
jump like
magic!

Set your magic disc on a hard surface and wait a few moments. Suddenly... "CLICK"... it leaps high in the air. It's amazing... it's startling... it's fun!

Have Jumping
Disc contests.

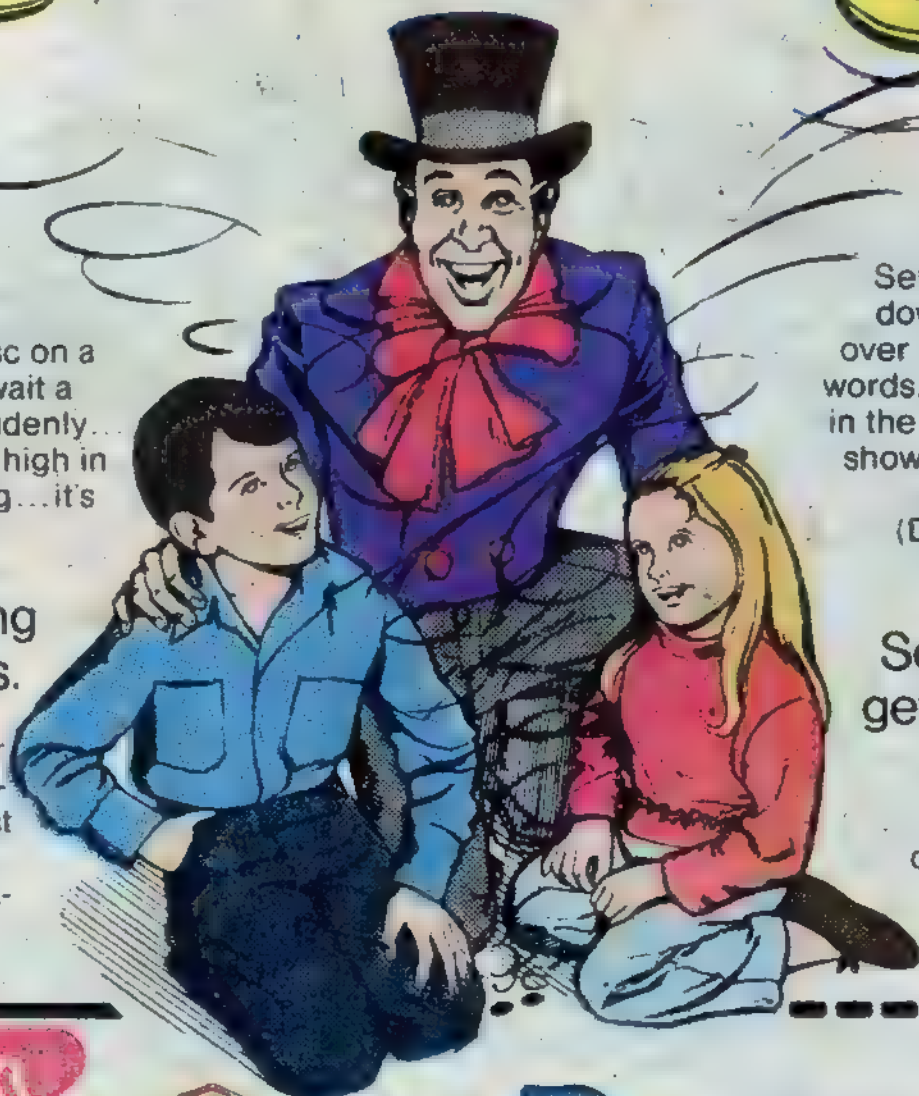
See whose disc jumps highest... or first. Or, play elimination with the first disc to jump being "out". Have tournaments.

Put on
magic shows.

Set your Jumping Disc down. Wave your hand over it and say the magic words. Wow! It jumps high in the air. You catch it and show that it has changed colors. What a trick! (Directions on how to do it are included.)

Send today and
get double discs!

If you hurry, Willy Wonka will send you TWO Magic Discs... one red... one blue... here's all you have to do!



To receive
Willy Wonka's Magic
Jumping Disc, send
this coupon plus two
empty packages from
Willy Wonka candies
and 50¢ to:

Willy Wonka Magic Disc Offer,
P.O. Box 123, Bethalto, IL 62010.
(Please print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

AH, THE LADY APPEARS.
SHANG-CHI--AND IS
SHE NOT A LOVELY
TEMPTRESS?
ALMOST A
GODDESS...

IT IS A SHAME,
REALLY, FOR
YOU AND I
COULD HAVE
REAPED A
RICH
HARVEST
THIS
AUTUMN
NIGHT.

IN ANY OTHER TIME, AT ANY
OTHER PLACE, IT WOULD BE
MY SACRED DUTY TO SLAY
YOU--YOU WHO HAVE
SPURNED CELESTIAL FU
MANCHU--YOU HIS
VERY SON!

BUT TONIGHT
THE TEMPTRESS
CALLS ME AWAY
FROM OUR FIGHT
--LURES ME TO
THE FINAL ACT
OF MY FORTY-
YEAR MISSION!



NEVER, SI-FAN,
WILL YOUR FOUL
MISSION BE
COMPLETED--NOT
WHILE I STILL
BREATHE!

"BUT HIS OWN
MASK HAS
DECEIVED ME
INTO CARE-
LESSNESS!"



UHN!
KRAK

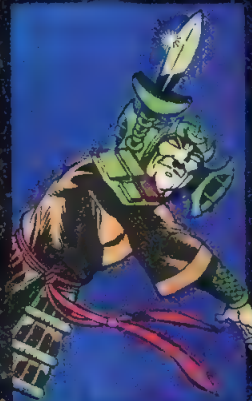
"PAIN FLARES
BRIGHTLY..."



NOW, MARA
LING, YOUR
DARKNESS.



NO--!



NOOO!!



"...BUT I STILL BREATHE.



"YET FOR
NAUGHT.

"BLINDLY, HE HALTS
THE BLADE.

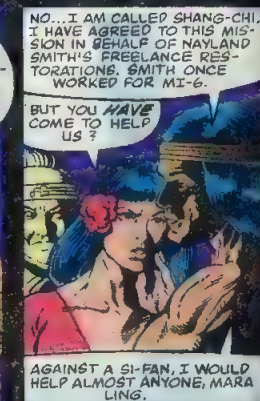


"AND WHEN WE RISE, THE
SI-FAN IS--

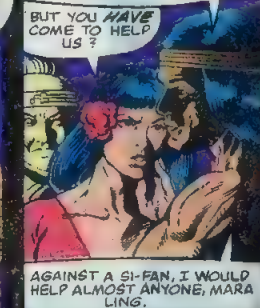
GONE--
BUT HE
WILL
RETURN.



ARE YOU
FROM MI-6?



NO...I AM CALLED SHANG-CHI.
I HAVE AGREED TO THIS MISSION
IN BEHALF OF NAYLAND
SMITH'S FREELANCE RES-
TORATIONS. SMITH ONCE
WORKED FOR MI-6.



AGAINST A SI-FAN, I WOULD
HELP ALMOST ANYONE, MARA
LING.



GOOD. HE IS DEATH ITSELF,
AND WE HAVE FLED HIM FOR
FORTY YEARS MOVING FROM
ONE CORNER OF THE ORIENT
TO THE OTHER...



...UNTIL
LAST
WEEK...

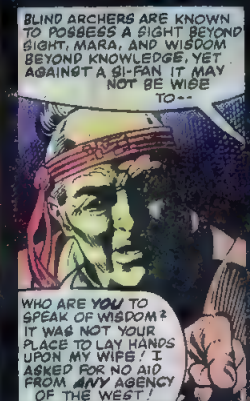


...WHEN
MY HUSBAND
STOPPED
RUNNING.

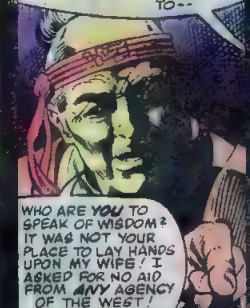


HE SAYS
THERE ARE
FORTY YEARS
OF SHAME
BEHIND US...

...AND THAT
THE TIME
HAS COME
TO MAKE A
STAND...HERE
...AND NOW.



BLIND ARCHERS ARE KNOWN
TO POSSESS A SIGHT BEYOND
SIGHT, MARA, AND WISDOM
BEYOND KNOWLEDGE. YET
AGAINST A SI-FAN IT MAY
NOT BE WISE
TO--



WHO ARE YOU
TO SPEAK OF WISDOM?
IT WAS NOT YOUR
PLACE TO LAY HANDS
UPON MY WIFE! I
ASKED FOR NO AID
FROM ANY AGENCY
OF THE WEST!



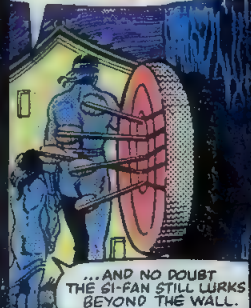
IT IS MY PLACE TO DEFEND
MY WIFE--WITHOUT
INTERFERENCE!



HE IS A MAN FIRM IN HIS
WAYS, SHANG CHI, AND HIS
WAYS ARE THE WAYS OF
HONOR.



I FEAR IT WILL YET SPELL
HIS DEATH, AND IT IS THE
ONLY REASON I WENT BE-
YOND HIM FOR HELP. NOW
COME--INSIDE--IT WILL
BE DARK SOON...



...AND NO DOUBT
THE SI-FAN STILL LURKS
BEYOND THE WALL.



*THE PAGODA IS HUSHED...

LI RESTS NOW. WE MAY TALK.

TALK?

YOU HAVE QUESTIONS I MUST ANSWER.



DO I?

THEY ARE TWO. WHY AM I SO YOUNG WHEN MY HUSBAND IS SO OLD? AND WHY IS THE SI-FAN AFTER MY LIFE?

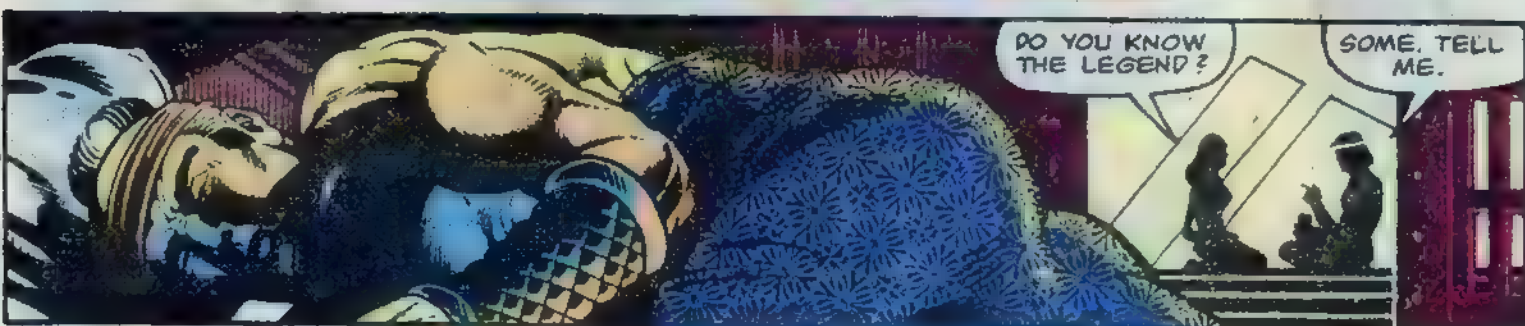
I HAVE NOT ANSWERED THESE QUESTIONS... BUT MOMENTS AGO, HEARING THE DIM SOUNDS OF THE FIRST FIRECRACKERS MARKING THE FESTIVAL OF THE AUTUMN MOON --



-- I KNEW I MUST NOW ANSWER THEM TO A STRANGER.

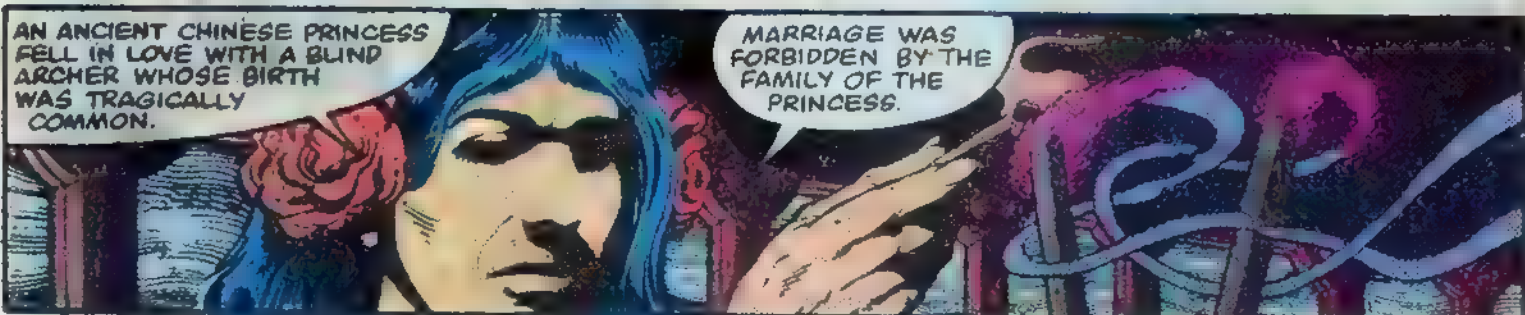
I HAD A... FEELING YOU WOULD COME. YOU OR **SOMEONE**. IT IS ONLY FITTING, FOR FATE SURROUNDS THIS NIGHT, LIKE THE WALL AROUND THIS HOME WHICH SUFFERS OUR SIEGE.

PERHAPS THAT IS WHY I WENT TO MI-6 WHEN I FELT THE COMING OF THE FESTIVAL WHICH SO CLEARLY ECHOES MY OWN LIFE WITH LI.



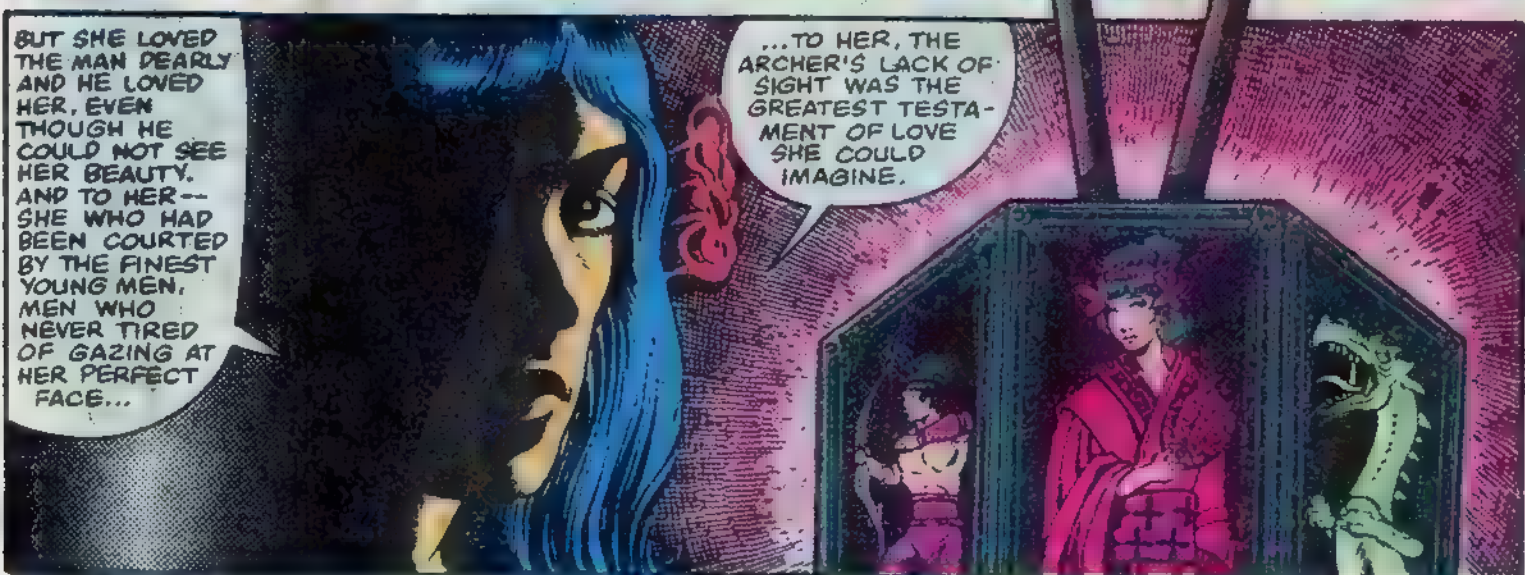
DO YOU KNOW THE LEGEND?

SOME. TELL ME.



AN ANCIENT CHINESE PRINCESS FELL IN LOVE WITH A BLIND ARCHER WHOSE BIRTH WAS TRAGICALLY COMMON.

MARRIAGE WAS FORBIDDEN BY THE FAMILY OF THE PRINCESS.



BUT SHE LOVED THE MAN DEARLY AND HE LOVED HER, EVEN THOUGH HE COULD NOT SEE HER BEAUTY. AND TO HER-- SHE WHO HAD BEEN COURTED BY THE FINEST YOUNG MEN, MEN WHO NEVER TIRED OF GAZING AT HER PERFECT FACE...

...TO HER, THE ARCHER'S LACK OF SIGHT WAS THE GREATEST TESTAMENT OF LOVE SHE COULD IMAGINE.

"AND SO, ONE FINE NIGHT THEY STOLE OFF TOGETHER, SACRIFICING EVERYTHING-- SHE, HER HIGH STANDING OF BIRTH, AND HE, HIS PLACE IN THE ORDER OF BLIND ARCHERS.

"BUT IT FAILED TO ASSUAGE THE GUILT. AND SO, TO EASE THEIR SHAME THEY SOUGHT COUNSEL FROM THE IMMORTAL AND ALL-WISE DRAGONS OF THE MOUNTAINS.

"THE LOVERS HAD SACRIFICED ENOUGH, THE DRAGONS SAID; THERE WAS NO NEED TO SACRIFICE LOVE ITSELF. THEY SANCTIONED THE MARRIAGE. GREATLY RELIEVED, THE COUPLE PREPARED TO DEPART...

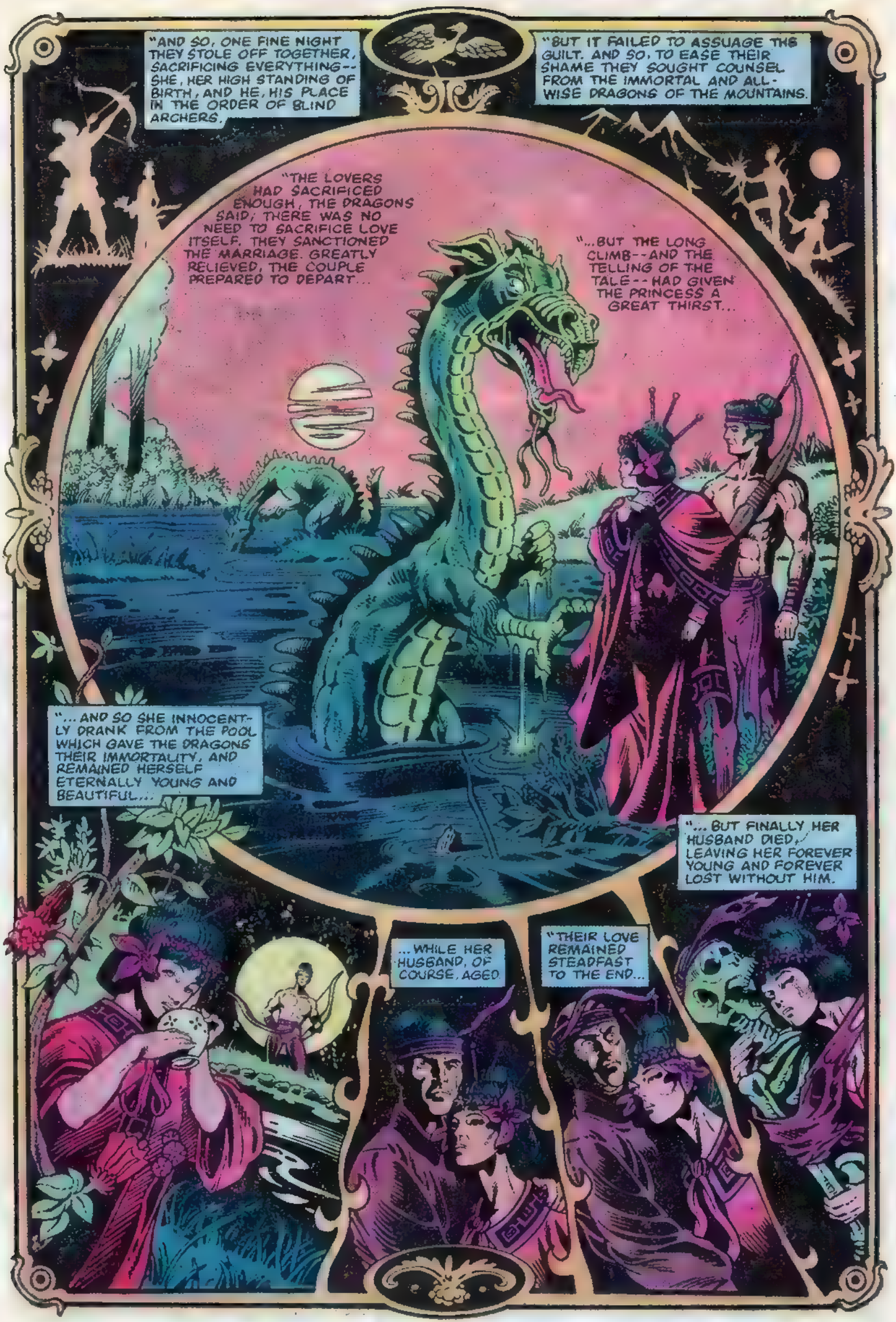
"...BUT THE LONG CLIMB--AND THE TELLING OF THE TALE-- HAD GIVEN THE PRINCESS A GREAT THIRST...

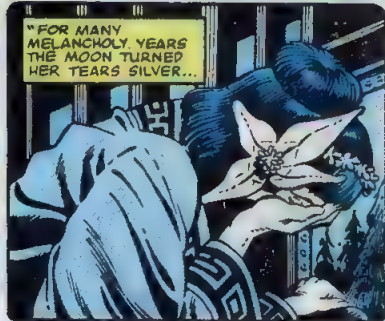
"...AND SO SHE INNOCENTLY DRANK FROM THE POOL WHICH GAVE THE DRAGONS THEIR IMMORTALITY, AND REMAINED HERSELF ETERNALLY YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL...

"...BUT FINALLY HER HUSBAND DIED, LEAVING HER FOREVER YOUNG AND FOREVER LOST WITHOUT HIM.

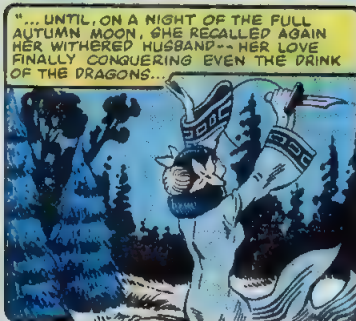
...WHILE HER HUSBAND, OF COURSE, AGED

"THEIR LOVE REMAINED STEADFAST TO THE END...

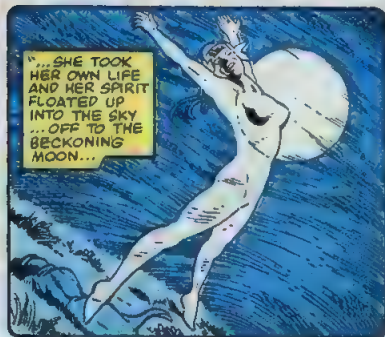




"FOR MANY
MELANCHOLY YEARS
THE MOON TURNED
HER TEARS SILVER..."



"...UNTIL, ON A NIGHT OF THE FULL
AUTUMN MOON, SHE RECALLED AGAIN
HER WITHERED HUSBAND-- HER LOVE
FINALLY CONQUERING EVEN THE DRINK
OF THE DRAGONS..."



"...SHE TOOK
HER OWN LIFE
AND HER SPIRIT
FLOATED UP
INTO THE SKY
...OFF TO THE
BECKONING
MOON..."



"...THERE TO LIVE
WITH HER HUSBAND
AT LAST."

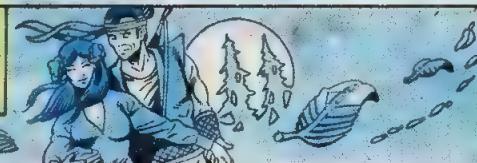
"AND
FOREVER."



"I AM NOT A PRINCESS,
SHANG-CHI-- BUT I
WAS HIGH BORN IN
THE CHINESE
CASTE SYSTEM."

"SOME FORTY YEARS
AGO, JUST AS IN
THE LEGEND, I TOO,
FELL IN LOVE WITH
A BLIND ARCHER."

"LI SAID THAT UNTIL
HE MET ME, HE HAD
WISHED TO SEE ONLY
ONE THING, AND ONLY
ONCE-- THE MOON.
IT WAS AT THAT MO-
MENT THAT MY LOVE
SPRANG FULL."



"BUT MY PARENTS FOR-
BODE THE MARRIAGE,
HAVING ARRANGED FOR
ME TO WED A MANDARIN
NOBLE-- FU MANCHU."



"I WAS
POWERLESS
TO RESIST."

"AND I KNEW, TOO,
THAT I WOULD ALSO
BE POWERLESS IF
EVER I GAZED INTO
THOSE JADE GREEN
EYES."



"I CALLED UPON ALL
MY LOVE FOR LI TO RESIST
FU MANCHU, REFUSING
TO CONSUMMATE OUR
MARRIAGE."



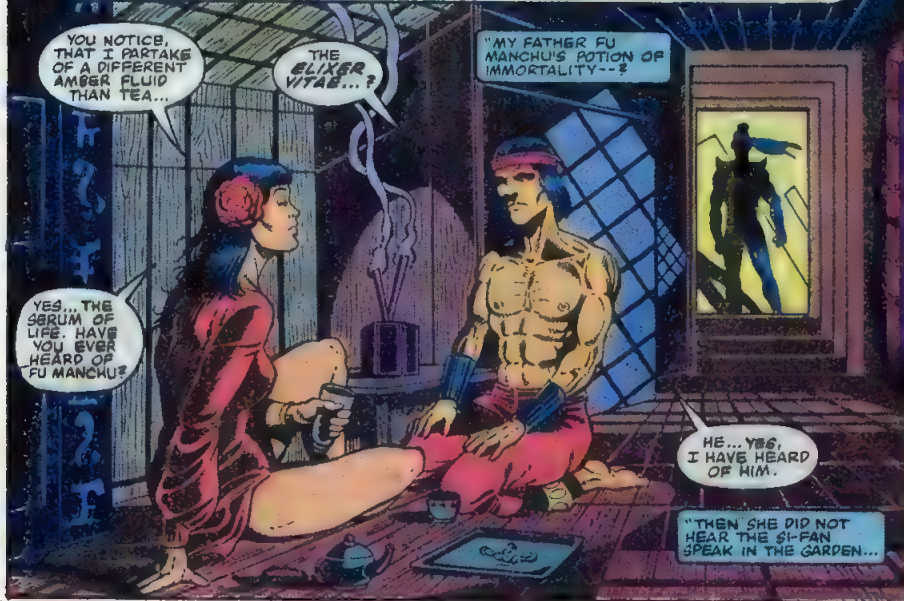
"HE ADMITTED OURS WAS A
MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE, A
WAY FOR HIM TO ENHANCE
HIS BUSINESS AFFAIRS, AND
HE OFFERED TO RELEASE
ME IF I WOULD BUT SUBMIT
TO HIM FOR A SINGLE
NIGHT."



"STILL I
REFUSED."



"FINALLY, HE TEMPTED ME WITH
THE ELIXIR VITAE, HIS SERUM OF
ETERNAL LIFE, PROMISING I
COULD LEAVE WITH ENOUGH OF
IT TO LAST... FOREVER."



"YOU NOTICE,
THAT I PARTAKE
OF A DIFFERENT
AMBER FLUID
THAN TEA..."

"THE
ELIXIR
VITAE...?"

"MY FATHER FU
MANCHU'S POTION OF
IMMORTALITY--"

"YES... THE
SERUM OF
LIFE. HAVE
YOU EVER
HEARD OF
FU MANCHU?"

"HE... YES,
I HAVE HEARD
OF HIM."

"THEN SHE DID NOT
HEAR THE SI-FAN
SPEAK IN THE GARDEN..."

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"I DRANK."

"I SUBMITTED."

THE NEXT DAY I RETURNED TO LI WITH THE SERUM, BUT HE CURSED IT AS A DEVIL'S POTION AND REFUSED TO DRINK OF IT. HE DEMANDS TO KNOW WHERE IT HAD COME FROM. I SAID IT WAS A GIFT.

THEN THE SI-FAN MADE HIS FIRST ATTACK ON ME-- AND LI REPELLED HIM WITH HIS BOW.

WE FLED THE SI-FAN FOR FORTY YEARS. OBVIOUSLY, HE ALSO DRINKS OF THE ELIXIR-- FOR HIS POWER HAS, IF ANYTHING, GROWN.

AFTER THE FIRST ATTACK, LI ASKED WHY A SI-FAN WOULD WISH TO KILL ME. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD LIED BEFORE-- THAT I HAD ACTUALLY STOLEN THE ELIXIR FROM FU MANCHU, AND THAT THE SI-FAN SOUGHT VENGEANCE.

YOU TOLD HIM A SECOND LIE, THEN.

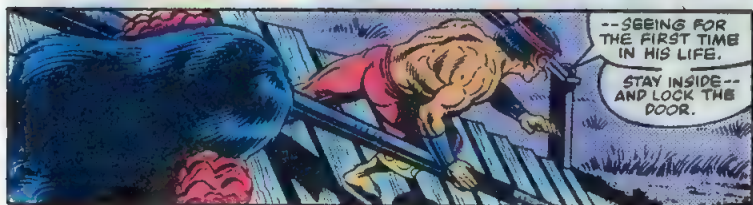
YES...

...TO KEEP HIS LOVE, I TOLD YOU-- HE IS FIRM IN THE WAYS OF HONOR. HE COULD NEVER LOVE ME IF HE KNEW THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT I DID WITH FU MANCHU...

BUT WHY THE SI-FAN TRULY HUNTS ME I CANNOT SAY--

--UNLESS FU MANCHU IS MERELY A CREATURE OF CRUELTY RATHER THAN A MAN.

"YES."





"...L!!

"DEAD--!"



"FOR... 'HONOR'--!"



ONE
DEAD,
SHANG-
CHI.



TWO TO GO.

"FIREWORKS
FLASH..."



YES, I HAVE DECIDED
TO INCLUDE YOU, AFTER
ALL, IN MY RICH
HARVEST.



"IT BUILDS WITHIN ME, AS I GAZE UPON
THIS HAUGHTY TAKER OF LIFE WITH HIS
EVER-SMILING MASK..."

"...A SOUNDLESS FURY
OF THE SOUL..."

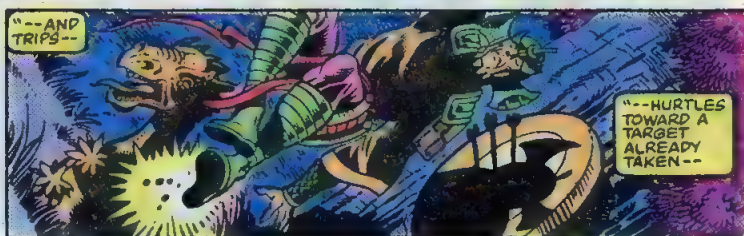
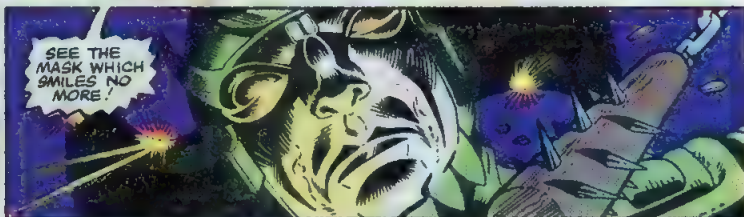
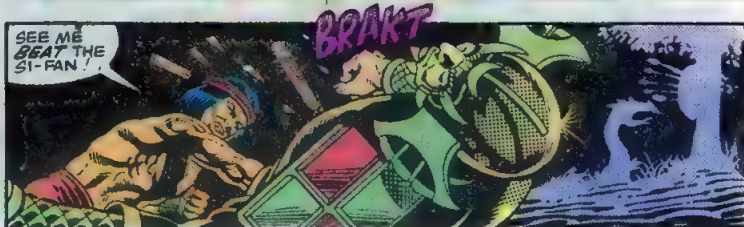


"...A FURY
WHICH
CRIES FOR
RELEASE,
IN THE
VOICE OF
SHRIEKING
DEMONS."





"...AS HE
WATCHES,
WITH TWICE-
DEAD EYES."



"...ADDING HIMSELF TO
THE TOLL."

"IN THE CITY,
STILL THE BRIGHT
GAY FESTIVAL
GOES ON..."

"BUT ON A WINDSWEEP
HILL, THE MOON HAS
GROWN COLD."

MARA... YOUR
HUSBAND... HE--

"THE
DOOR
IS NOT
LOCKED"

I KNOW, SHANG-CHI...
HE WENT OUT TO DIE...
IN THE ONLY HONOR I
LEFT TO HIM...

AND NOW... I TOO
MUST SEEK THE
ONLY HONOR LEFT
TO ME...

"HAS THE
BLIND ARCHER
SEEN IT?"

"IN HER HAND,
ANOTHER FLASK--
DIFFERENT FROM
THE ORNATE
PHIAL WHICH
EARLIER TOUCHED
HER LIPS..."

"THEN SHE HAS
TAKEN ANOTHER
'ELIXIR'..."

"... THIS ONE CATCHING THE
LIGHT OF THE MOON, AND
GLEAMING JUST AS COLDLY..."

POISON, MARA--WHY?!

LOVE... AND ITS
LOSS. CAN'T YOU
SEE--? IN LIFE...
MY HUSBAND NEVER
SAW ME... OR THE
MOON...

"ALREADY
HER VOICE
THICKENS
AND BLURS..."

BULLPEN BULLETINS

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN...

Hello. I'm back again. Ordinarily, in this space, I regale you with alleged wit, provide you with behind-the-scenes personal glimpses of the Marvel Bullpen, announce the news, and pontificate from my perch as Editor-in-Chief. But this time, I'm going to devote the entire column to answering the question I've been asked a couple of thousand times recently: "Since I don't have a Comics Specialty Shop near my home, how can I buy MOON KNIGHT, THE MICRONAUTS, KA-ZAR and Marvel's other Direct Exclusives?"

Well, I checked with Ed Shukin, our Vice President of Circulation, who referred me to Mike Friedrich, our Direct Sales Manager, who said that anyone having trouble getting Marvel's non-newsstand publications should get in touch with the Direct Distributor nearest him. The following is a list of those Distributors:

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Got that? Okay. And if they can't help you, write to me here at 575 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022. I'm always here.

HAPPY TRAILS TO YOU...

...because it's five forty-five here and I'm off to celebrate with Frank Miller and Denys Cowan their birthdays (January 27th and 30th, respectively). A bunch of us Bullpeners are having a dinner bash at D'Angelo's and I don't want to be late for the linguini!

Till next month,

Shooter

Jim Shooter



THE HYPE BOX

INCREDIBLE HULK #273 — With all the new special projects and hoo-ha events happening around here, we sometimes forget about what a great job BILL MANTLO and SAL BUSCEMA do every month on this mainstay Marvel mag. We shouldn't — and we hope you don't either. It's still a fine example of consistently exciting super hero storytelling.

CONAN #136 — Big JOHN BUSCEMA is back — and how!

MASTER OF KUNG FU #114 — For this one, writer DOUG MOENCH sequestered himself in the library, researching ancient Chinese legends, and he's come up with a chillingly authentic story. See for yourself.

THE MIGHTY MARVEL CHECKLIST

- ☐ MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE #89 — The Thing and the Human Torch
- ☐ KING CONAN #11
- ☐ DAZZLER #17 — guest-starring the Angel!
- ☐ KA-ZAR #16
- ☐ DENNIS THE MENACE #8
- ☐ DAREDEVIL #184
- ☐ TEAM AMERICA #2
- ☐ AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #230
- ☐ CAPTAIN AMERICA #271
- ☐ THOR #321
- ☐ MICRONAUTS #43
- ☐ GHOST RIDER #70
- ☐ MOON KNIGHT #21
- ☐ G.I. JOE #1
- ☐ INCREDIBLE HULK #273
- ☐ ROM #32
- ☐ AVENGERS #221
- ☐ MARVEL SUPER HERO CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS (Limited Series) #2
- ☐ POWER MAN/IRON FIST #63
- ☐ MARVEL TALES #141 — Re-printing Amazing Spider-Man #4 by Lee and Ditko.
- ☐ CONAN #136
- ☐ X-MEN #159 — penciled — this month only — by BILL SIENKIEWICZ
- ☐ FANTASTIC FOUR #244
- ☐ IRON MAN #180
- ☐ PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #88
- ☐ DEFENDERS #100
- ☐ STAR WARS #81
- ☐ MASTER OF KUNG FU #114
- ☐ MARVEL TEAM-UP #119 — Spider-Man and the Gargoyle. Pencils by KERRY GAMMILL

MARVEL MAGAZINES

- ☐ CRAZY #87
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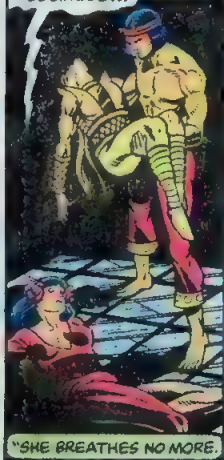
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DENNIS O'NEIL
EDITOR
RALPH MACCHIO
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Doug Moench,

I have always liked MASTER OF KUNG FU (some early stories were printed black & white in a British edition) and I've recently got hold of the entire series in one fell — and expensive — swoop. Some idiot sold his whole set to a comic shop and I bought 'em. Well, anyway, now I love the book, more and more, having just read it through from the beginning. And most of all, I love Shang-Chi himself. He is the only truly human hero in all of the Marvel Universe. In fact, I suppose it is genuine concern for him which prompts this letter.

The latest issue I have is #103, at the end of which Leiko seems to have gone off with Shen Kuei, soon after Juliette has returned. Now I cannot imagine Shang-Chi with any other woman but Leiko, especially since they have grown together so much since #69. However, I have no objection to Leiko asserting her independence, though I can't see why she has to act like a female James Bond to do it. What I am really afraid of is that you are planning to put Shang-Chi on a permanent romantic basis with Juliette. Please! Please! Don't do it! It is obvious she can never bring anyone happiness. The elements of sadness and tragedy are necessary to maintain the mysterious "bewitching" quality of her life. Indeed, she's like a drug addict! After a while she would find it necessary to drive Shang-Chi away, so she could go on wallowing in her melancholy. This kind of false "romance" is the last thing Shang-Chi needs in his present confused state. I can only say again: Don't do it to him!

Incidentally, now that Shang-Chi and his sister Fah Lo Suee no longer have to be enemies, isn't it time they got to know each other better? I would like to think there was at least one person in Shang's family who didn't find it necessary to order his death on the spur of the moment. Men haven't exactly treated Fah Lo Suee well, you know — perhaps Shang could help her.

Well, thanks for providing reality in escapism, with all that implies of sorrow in happiness and good in evil. MOKF is the only comic that has ever made me feel anything, and it makes me feel a lot. Don't ever stop.

P.S. Please keep the setting in Britain. Although it is often incorrect in technical details, it nevertheless actually feels like Britain. Much as I love Gulacy's early artwork, I prefer the way women are depicted in MOKF now. Don't let Leiko go back to looking like a male fantasy figure. And I do hope you read this personally, Doug, because I keep thinking of more to say. Why do women — first Juliette, then Leiko — keep betraying Shang-Chi? Isn't this reinforcing the stereotype of woman as vamp/Mata Hari or whatever? No wonder he's so disillusioned. But I can't believe it of Leiko; don't spoil the best relationship in Marvel Comics. Change it, sure, but don't spoil it. (And I love Gene Day's artwork!)

Deborah Calverley
10 Victoria Rd.
Summertown Oxford U.K.

No doubt by now you've surmounted the overseas time-lag, Deborah, and we trust you've been accordingly relieved to learn that Leiko did not betray Shang; it was all a ruse on her part to gain confidence and info from Shen Kuei. That leaves Juliette — and yes, she has "betrayed" her men, but we hope you've noticed the implicit (as well as explicit) complexity of her character, elevating her beyond the level of stereotype and ensuring her "betrayals" of a status transcending frivolous perfidy. And let us not forget Clive Reston, who (from the other side of the gender line) provides more than ample counterbalance to Juliette. In his own way, and for quite different reasons, the lad has hardly earned the quality of romantic fidelity. We suspect it's something in the genes.

(And yes, Doug does indeed read these letters personally. In fact, he wouldn't miss 'em for the world!)

Doug & Gene,

It is hard, very hard, to write a letter to MASTER OF KUNG FU. This is not one of those regular-type books to which I can knock off a good old breezy LOC.

It is hard to explain MOKF, at least hard for me. When people tell me they don't read it because it's just a kung fu book and they don't like kung fu, I want to say, "BUT IT ISN'T A KUNG FU BOOK!" Of course, then they would ask "What is it?" and I wouldn't know what to reply. Except to say that it is a genuine work of art, better than many novels being published today.

I guess the best thing I can say is thank you. Thank you for making this book what it is. Whatever it is. When I find out I'll tell you, and I'll let anyone else know whether they want to listen or not. Anyway, rest assured that if I do not write every issue it isn't that I don't like a particular story; it's simply that I really don't know what to say.

Mike Sopp
438 W. 32
Erie, PA 16508

Neither do we, Mike — except be here next issue, and then we can sit around staring at each other with so much to say but no way of expressing it. (By the way, next issue will feature a unique tale called "Deals" — as well as a brand-new villain called the Death-Dealer. ... and wait'll you see the terrifying costume Gene Day has cooked up for him! One panel will speak a thousand words, saving us a lot of embarrassment. ...)

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